

Helané Wahbeh

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Career

Helané Wahbeh is director of research at the [Institute of Noetic Sciences \(IONS\)](#) and an adjunct assistant professor at Oregon Health & Science University. She holds a clinical doctorate from the National University of Natural Medicine and a master of clinical research from Oregon Health & Science University, where she has been on faculty since 2006. Wahbeh's research spans stress healing, mind-body medicine, and extended human capacities, drawing insight from her own meditation practice. She is the author of over 90 peer-reviewed publications. Her latest book, *The Science of Channeling*, blends cutting-edge science with practical insights.

Telephone Telepathy

Wahbeh and the IONS team carried out experiments in which 177 participants tried to use psi to identify a person calling on the telephone. Trials were designed to distinguish between either telepathy or precognition, with callers chosen before or after guesses, respectively. Telepathic trials significantly exceeded chance even when a more conservative test was used that accounted for a response bias (50.4% vs. 45% $p = 0.02$), whereas precognitive trials did not exceed chance (31.9% vs. 33.3%). Genetic relatedness notably impacted accuracy, with 25% genetic relatedness being linked with 2.88 times higher odds of identifying the caller ($p = 0.04$). Communication frequency, which indicated how frequently the caller and callee communicated on a regular basis, correlated positively ($p = 0.03$) with correctly identifying the caller, while emotional closeness and physical distance between the caller and callee did not significantly affect outcomes. Although the telepathy results favoured the psi hypothesis, the failure to find psi in more stringent precognition testing leaves open more conventional explanations like cheating and sensory leakage.^{[1](#)}

Consistency in Psi Ability

Wahbeh, Delorme and Radin developed an online platform to identify individuals with potential psi talent, testing 1,014 participants across eight psychophysics tasks including remote viewing, card guessing, and psychokinesis. In Phase 1, statistically significant above-chance performance was observed in remote viewing ($p = 0.0012$) and card tasks ($p = 0.0008$), with overall performance across tasks showing significance ($p = 0.0001$). The top 50 performers were retested in Phase 2, where remote viewing ($p = 0.0284$) and psychokinesis ($p = 0.0347$) showed above-chance trends, though these did not withstand [Bonferroni correction](#). Personality

correlations revealed that conscientiousness was positively associated with performance in the full sample ($p = 0.05$) but negatively in the selected group ($p = 0.02$), while agreeableness positively correlated with remote viewing performance ($p = 0.03$).[2](#)

Psi Experiences Among Scientists

Wahbeh and colleagues carried out a study of the prevalence of psi experiences among scientists and engineers, to test the idea that this would be lower among a section of the population especially characterized by rational thinking.[3](#) Invitations to participate in a survey on the frequency of 'unique human experiences' were accepted by 1216 individuals drawn from three categories of American adults: the general population, scientists and engineers, and members of IONS (categorized as paranormal 'enthusiasts'). Of these, 899 completed the survey. Some 93% of the scientists and engineers claimed to have had at least one meaningful experience, comparable to those in the 'general population' group (94%), and only slightly fewer than the enthusiasts (99%). Once potentially normal experiences attributable to empathy and intuition were excluded, the figures were still high at around 89% for both groups. The possibility of self-selection was mitigated by the fact that the purpose of the study was masked and that having begun to complete it, only a quarter of the scientists and engineers dropped out, compared with 42% and 32% of the general population and enthusiasts respectively. The authors conclude that 'experiences that could be termed "psychic" are reported by scientists and engineers to a surprisingly large degree, especially in light of academic bias against the existence and investigation of such experiences'.[4](#)

Surveying Trance Channellers

In a report published in 2020, Wahbeh describes the results of an online survey of trance channellers – people who claim to be able to connect to a deceased individual when in an altered state. Mental health factors, personality characteristics and subjective experience data were collected from 83 participants. Results indicated that most held a 'spiritual rather than religious' worldview and developed channelling ability in middle age. Against sceptical assertions, most did not demonstrate any psychotic or dissociative tendencies compared to the normal population: survey respondents reported similar scores to the general population on most personality factors, including psychological absorption and empathy. Channellers showed high levels of belief in life after death, non-local consciousness and telepathy, and tended to view their experiences in a positive light, impacting positively on general wellbeing.[5](#)

12-Factor Model of Noetic Experiences

Wahbeh and colleagues developed the Noetic Signature Inventory, a 44-item questionnaire based on a 12-factor model that measures individuals' unique experiences of psi phenomena, demonstrating strong psychometric properties including internal consistency and validity. Recent work established norms and patterns among the 12 factors, revealing 'Knowing Yourself' as the most common

experience and 'Inner Knowing Through Touch' as the least common, with notable score differences linked to gender and ethnicity. The 12 factors encompass various noetic experiences including General Intuition, Embodied Sensations, Visualizing to Access or Affect, Healing, Knowing the Future, Physical Sensations from Other People, Knowing Other's Minds, Apparent Communication with Non-physical Beings, Knowing Through Dreams, and Inner Voice.[6](#)

Genetics and Psi

Wahbeh conducted a case-control study comparing the genomes of 13 individuals claiming psychic abilities (or having family members with such abilities) to 10 controls without such claims, discovering significant genetic differences where psychics possessed the original form of a chromosome 7 region while controls had a mutated version. This finding raises intriguing questions about potential genetic underpinnings of psychic experiences, suggesting a possible biological component to what has traditionally been considered purely subjective phenomena.[7](#)

Trance Channelling

Wahbeh conducted multiple studies on trance channelling, first examining the phenomenology of channellers who demographically resembled the general population but exhibited high belief in paranormal phenomena and reported receiving anomalous information, with potential environmental effects suggested by random number generator data variations between channelling and control sessions.[8](#)

In subsequent research with Cannard and Delorme,[9](#) physiological measurements (EEG, ECG, GSR) showed minimal differences during channelling despite participants' subjective experiences of altered states, though voice analyses indicated genuine consciousness shifts. Meanwhile, a follow-up EEG study revealed distinctive neurological patterns where trance states displayed increased frontal beta and gamma power compared to mind-wandering states that showed increased frontal delta and theta power, suggesting trance involves heightened mental silence.[10](#)

Michael Duggan

Literature

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Endnotes

Footnotes

- [1.](#) Wahbeh et al (2024).
- [2.](#) Wahbeh et al (2025).
- [3.](#) Wahbeh et al (2018).
- [4.](#) Wahbeh et al (2018)
- [5.](#) Wahbeh & Butzer (2020).
- [6.](#) Wahbeh et al (2022a).
- [7.](#) Wahbeh et al (2021b).
- [8.](#) Pederzoli et al (2021a).
- [9.](#) Wahbeh et al (2019).
- [10.](#) Wahbeh et al (2023b).